



## Christ Church Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101464
<b>Inspection date</b>	31 October 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Miriam Sheila Brown
<b>Setting Address</b>	Church Hall, Malvern Road, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 2JH
<b>Telephone number</b>	01242 578163 or 01452 548525
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Christchurch Pre-School Playgroup (Church Hall)
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Christchurch Pre-School Playgroup is situated in the church hall alongside Christchurch Church, in a residential area of Cheltenham and is within walking distance of the town centre. The group use two halls within the building, one is used for general play and the other is used for large physical play. There is an enclosed outside area. The group is open each week day during school terms from 09.00 until 11.45. A pre-school session is offered on Tuesday mornings.

The playgroup is registered to provide care for 30 children from two to five years and they accept children from two-years-nine-months. There are currently 37 children on roll. Of these, 25 receive funding for early years education. The group have experience in providing support for children with special needs and there are currently two children who speak English as an additional language.

The team of eight staff work at different times during the week. The joint play leaders and deputy all hold appropriate early years qualifications and assistants have attended early years training. Most staff have attended first aid training and all have completed child protection training. The staff are supported by the Gloucestershire Playgroup and Toddler Association fieldworker, the local authority Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and the Foundation Stage consultant.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene as they are encouraged to wash their hands prior to eating, and after using the toilet. Staff offer themselves as good role models by paying close attention to basic hygiene practices such as wiping tables with anti-bacterial spray prior to eating, and quickly cleaning any spills during snack times. They maintain accident and medication records effectively and have received first aid training, helping to ensure that children are cared for appropriately if they have an accident or become unwell. The premises are maintained to a high level of cleanliness and children may independently visit the toilets and find tissues for their noses, assisting in developing their awareness of personal care.

Snack times are pleasant social occasions when children enjoy a variety of fruit, vegetables, toast, cheese and crackers. They are encouraged to learn social skills such as passing a plate of food around the table and pouring their own drinks. However, children do not have free access to drinking water throughout the session. Children's dietary requirements are documented and individual needs met effectively. Their knowledge of how food is prepared and cooked is further enhanced through cooking sessions when they make jam tarts, smoothies and vegetable soup.

Children's physical development is extremely well supported through a wide range of planned activities which assist in their small and large muscle development. They play outside each day on wheeled toys and have free play in the hall, throughout the sessions using large equipment such as a climbing frame and slide. Children move freely, confidently and with pleasure. They demonstrate good spatial awareness when negotiating an obstacle course set out in the hall and thoroughly enjoy moving like giants, mice or crabs. Children manipulate small construction pieces, paint, draw and use tools with growing ability, effectively assisting their small muscle development.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children and parents are greeted by staff each morning and the hall is prepared prior to children's arrival. The premises are clean, warm and well maintained. Space is organised effectively to provide a wide variety of play opportunities which include table-top games, soft areas, large physical play and craft work.

Furniture, toys and equipment are in good repair and checked daily before use. There is a good range of resources to ensure children are comfortable and can play and eat together, assisting in developing their social skills. Children can reach their toys and equipment easily although this is restricted to resources set out by staff at the start of a session. Staff rotate certain toys and activities according to their plans for the day.

Children's safety is very well maintained and proper precautions are taken to promote safety within the premises, for example, evacuation details are clearly displayed and exits unobstructed. Staff ensure the premises are secure at all times and are vigilant in ensuring that main doors are secured when children are present. Outside areas are secure. Staff supervise all aspects of children's play, very well, including maintaining a detailed record of visitors to the premises.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by good staff awareness of child protection procedures. The current policy clearly outlines their approach to any concerns and all staff receive child protection training to familiarise themselves with the signs and symptoms of abuse.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children take part in a varied range of activities throughout each session. Younger children are confident in the setting and in their relationships with each other and staff. They are learning to take turns as they play with the computer and pour their drinks at snack time. They are encouraged to develop their communication skills at circle and other group times such as registration when they answer their names, sometimes joking with staff saying 'no' they are not there. Children enjoy using a wide range of creative materials such as dough, paint, shaving foam, and recycled materials for modelling, encouraging them to express their experiences and feelings in a variety of ways.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making generally good progress and staff support them generally well through their good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Planning covers all areas of learning, however, short term plans lack the detail required to enable some individual learning needs to be met appropriately. Observations and assessments are not completed on a regular enough basis to help inform planning, resulting in challenges not always being appropriate to individual stages of development. Staff have attended special needs training and provide good support for those with special needs. Children respond well to staff involvement in their play and learning.

Children's knowledge and understanding of their immediate and the wider world is very good. They have regular visits from the road safety unit and fire safety officer, and enjoy trips to the local supermarket to buy fruit and vegetables. Children use a range of everyday technology in their play and planned activities, for example, a grinder and the group computer. Children count and recognise some numerals, sort according to different criteria, such as colour and size, and weigh ingredients for cooking. However, they are not enabled to develop these skills in their free play.

Children are starting to recognise their written names, although further use of name cards to develop awareness of print having meaning, and opportunities to make marks in child-initiated play are limited. For example, role-play areas are not regularly available to children and most mark-making opportunities form part of adult-led activities. Children enjoy story times with staff although group times are sometimes disrupted by those who are not sufficiently engaged.

All children enjoy a wide and varied range of creative activities which stimulate their interest and increase their awareness of texture and use of different resources. For example, building models from recycled packaging and collage materials using glue, sticky tape and scissors.

Children are confident and have a good awareness of their own needs. They are learning to take turns and respond well to their key workers, helping to build their self esteem and respect for others. They talk animatedly to staff and unfamiliar adults about their experiences, for example, 'It's fun here, you can make things. I'm making this for my mummy and nanna and they are going to like it very much'. Children are beginning to concentrate on activities for extended periods of time.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children and parents are warmly welcomed to the playgroup each morning. Children demonstrate their confidence by settling quickly to activities and joining in with group routines such as registration, story and snack times. They are well known by staff who efficiently record individual details and highlight specific needs to ensure these are met effectively. Each child's birthday is celebrated by children singing 'Happy birthday' and blowing out the candles on the group cake. This assists in raising their awareness of the lives of others and developing self esteem. Children increase their knowledge of the local community by visiting local places of interest such as the church to which the group is attached. Children celebrate a variety of different festivals throughout the year, increasing their awareness of the wider world and different lifestyles. For example, they collect items for harvest celebrations and during the year fund raise for 'Children in Need'. Staff demonstrate a good awareness of special needs, enabling them to effectively support children who attend the group. This positive approach effectively assists in developing children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children are encouraged to be well behaved, for example, to share equipment and take turns in their play and activities, although staff are not always consistent in their expectations for behaviour, particularly during whole group times. The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff are available each day to discuss children's activities and progress, and organise open days and more formal feedback opportunities throughout the year. Parents take an active part in group sessions, helping on a rota basis and sharing interests such as individual areas of expertise. This partnership helps children in their continuing learning and development. Parents are provided with clear and informative written details about all aspects of group care and education, developing their interest and understanding of how their children learn.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management of the playgroup is good. Children's care is well supported by the organised and caring staff who demonstrate a strong commitment to developing children's learning through play. The premises are effectively organised to meet the children's needs. All legally required documentation is in place, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being. Good regard is given to keeping children's records and personal information confidential. All staff hold appropriate clearance to work with children and ratios are met at all times.

The nursery recruitment, induction and training programme is robust, and staff are supported in their ongoing training requirements. Most issues from the last inspection have been addressed although some require further development. The playgroup committee and staff meet regularly and playgroup staff meet each week to plan the following weeks activities, helping to ensure that children receive a good range of experiences. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the group agreed to provide a greater variety of resources to assist in developing children's design skills and their awareness of shape and pattern. They also agreed to provide activities to develop children's mathematical thinking and use observations to inform planning to ensure children are able to build on their prior knowledge.

The group have made generally good progress with each of these points. Each key worker makes observations for each member of their group, in each area of learning, although, these are not yet completed with sufficient regularity to provide a clear picture of the next stages in children's learning. Adult led activities firmly support children's mathematical awareness but there are few chances for children to build on this knowledge in their free play. Modelling with recycled products and other craft and design activities are now enjoyed by all children each day, effectively assisting them in their developing awareness of different materials and their uses.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide children with free access to fresh drinking water throughout the session

#### The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop children's free play choices to include more imaginary play and activities which enable children to independently explore number and mark-making (also applies to care).
- continue to develop observations and assessments to assist in planning to meet children's individual needs
- ensure there is a consistent approach to managing behaviour to enable children to understand boundaries and respond positively (also applies to care).

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)